

NSC BRIEFING

CUBA

NO CHANGE IN CLASS. (1)

~~SECRET~~

CLASS. & EXTENSION TO: J. C.

NEXT REVIEW DATE:

AUTH: HB 70-8

DATE: 12-76

REVIEWER: 372044

21 January 1959

- I. The past week saw a strong upsurge of anti-US feeling.**
 - A. Though the new govt contains some responsible men favorably disposed to US, anti-US sentiments are evident among many others, with most ready to place worst possible interpretation on every US action, private or official, past or present.**
 1. Anti-US feeling grew among rebels during civil war over US supplies to Batista (until March) and US military missions.
 - B. Current upsurge stimulated largely by criticism in US of Cuban executions.**
 1. Castro sees criticism as threat of US intervention.
 2. Over 200 executed; about 3,000 awaiting trial.
 3. Executions--generally popular in Cuba but criticized by a few responsible Cubans--are being condemned all over hemisphere; but Castro is ignoring all but US criticism.
 - C. Cubans also demanding extradition of "criminals" who escaped.**
 1. Biggest in US is Rolando Masferrer, hated pro-Batista senator and gangster whose private army in Oriente Province was responsible for many tortures and murders. A former Communist, he was assistant to French political commissar Andre Marti during Spanish civil war.
- II. Castro's anti-US campaign is provoking misgivings among some Cubans.**
 - A. Highly regarded Prime Minister Miro Cardona is angered; it was one of reasons for his 19 Jan threat to resign.**
 - B. At least two Havana newspapers have urged more restraint.**

- III. Though most govt leaders anti-Communist, Communists have been permitted to exploit new opportunities, and Castro says their Popular Socialist party (PSP)--outlawed in 1953--can now operate legally.
- A. PSP (8,000-12,000 members) surfaced immediately after Batista's fall.
1. PSP has opened offices in Havana and Santiago; resumed publication of daily newspaper Hoy; held first public rally 10 January.
 2. Exiled Cuban Communists, as well as Venezuelan, Dominican Communists, arriving Cuba.
- B. Way opening for Communist participation in elections promised in 18-24 months.
1. A Castro lieutenant, the Argentine "Che" Guevara, who may be a Communist, says he would not oppose Communist participation in govt.
- C. Armed forces, being almost complete destroyed and rebuilt with Castro forces, likely to be Communist-infiltrated.
- IV. Several members new govt increasingly irritated, frustrated over President Urrutia's deferring all decisions to Castro, thus slowing down govt operations.
- A. This main reason for Miro Cardona's threat to resign.
- [REDACTED]
- B. Education Minister was also considering his resignation.
- C. If this problem not settled, public confidence will be seriously shaken, and period political instability continue.
- D. Similar situation exists in armed forces.

25X6

~~SECRET~~

- V. Castro's victory may bring new trouble for Latin American dictators.
 - A. Exiles from rightist regimes in Dominican Republic and Nicaragua have arrived in Cuba, expecting aid for plots.
 - B. Haitian and Paraguayan exiles also getting sympathetic ear from Castro.

~~SECRET~~